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VERSATILE FACETS: SCHOLARLY PROGRAM NOTES FOR GRADUATE TROMBONE
RECITAL

by

Weston Mayer

B.S., York College of Pennsylvania, 2015

A Research Paper

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the
Master of Music

School of Music
in the Graduate School
Southern Illinois University Carbondale
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RESEARCH PAPER APPROVAL

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Approved by:

Dr. Christopher Morehouse, Chair

Dr. Jessica Butler

Dr. Richard Kelley

Graduate School
Southern Illinois University Carbondale
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AN ABSTRACT OF THE RESEARCH PAPER OF

WESTON MAYER, for the Master of Music Degree in MUSIC, submitted on APRIL 12, 2019, at Southern Illinois University Carbondale.

TITLE: VERSATILE FACETS: SCHOLARLY PROGRAM NOTES FOR GRADUATE TROMBONE RECITAL

MAJOR PROFESSOR: Dr. Jessica Butler

The purpose of this research paper is to examine the versatility of the trombone and the diverse styles and genres a trombone can function in to cultivate as many performance prospects as possible. Each chapter provides a brief biography of the lives and compositional styles of each composer accompanied by an analysis of each piece, performance considerations, pedagogical insight to navigate the challenges of each piece, and why each piece helps cultivate a versatile pallet for a trombonist. The compositions examined in this paper are Johan De Meij's *T-bone Concerto* (1996), Mike Davis's *Mission Red* (1994), Johannes Brahms's *Four Serious Songs* (1896), and a quartet arrangement of Claude Debussy's "The Girl with the Flaxen Hair" (1910).

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CHAPTER 1

JOHAN DE MEIJ T-BONE CONCERTO

Versatility is one of the most sought-after aspects in a performing musician's arsenal. Cultivating this skill may take decades; however, the benefits of being a versatile musician allows for a more performance populated reality. The multipurpose instrumentalist, specifically a trombonist, can fit into a plethora of musical ensembles, including chamber music, orchestras, jazz combos, big bands, and even session recordings. The trombone itself lends itself to the concept of versatility, so naturally it is an expertise that a trombonist should develop in order to maximize performing prospects. Dutch composer Johan de Meij's *T-bone Concerto* is relevant in examining trombone versatility because of the technical and lyrical dichotomy that presents itself throughout the composition which ensures many arduous rigors when rehearsing this piece.

"Dutch composer Johan de Meij was born in Voorburg, The Netherlands, in 1953. He studied trombone and conducting at the Royal Conservatory of Music at The Hague. De Meij earned international fame as a composer and arranger."¹ "His catalogue consists of original compositions, symphonic transcriptions, and arrangements of film scores and musicals"² These meritorious achievements essentially launched De Meij's composing career allowing him to become a renowned composer in Europe. "De Meij has since composed some hallmarks of the wind orchestra and orchestra bands all over the world, including, *The Lord of the Rings*, based on Tolkien's best-selling novels, and the *T-bone Concerto*."³ The *T-bone Concerto* was composed

¹ Mark Camphouse, ed., *Composers on Composing for Band*, vol. 2 (Chicago: GIA Publications), 4: 39.

² Ibid., 1.

³Ibid.

by De Meij in 1996 and is the culmination of De Meij's compositional style. Naturally the composition articulates De Meij's ability to write for the trombone and furthermore showcases De Meij's ability to additionally compose for orchestra. De Meij summarizes the *T-bone Concerto* as follows:

It consists of three movements called respectively 'Rare', 'Medium', and Well Done'. This work was commissioned by The Kentucky Music Educators Association...the world premiere of the complete work was performed by Jacques Mauger and the Band of the Royal Dutch Marines, conducted by Maurice Hamers, at the Concertgebouw Amsterdam on March 1st, 1996.⁴

Since the *T-bone Concerto's* inception, Johan De Meij's composition has become apart of the canon in standard trombone repertoire, challenging the performer with many technical demands. "Movements I and II are written in the A-B-A form and allow the soloist to display both the technical and lyrical characteristics of the instrument. Movement III develops into a [quasi] neo-baroque style using the thematic material of the first and second movement, and finally leads to a triumphant virtuosic conclusion."⁵

Movement I, 'Rare,' opens with accompaniment material for sixty measures cycling through various keys consisting of D major, F major, A-flat major and B major where an urgent *accelerando* accompanies the entrance of the trombone at m. 60. The *tempo giusto* starts in m. 61 and the solo begins the rhythmic ostinato figure that will be prevalent throughout the rest of the movement in D minor (see figure 1)

⁴ Johan De Meij, "T-bone Concerto (For Trombone & Wind Orchestra)," *The Music of Johan De Meij*, accessed January 21, 2019. http://www.johandemeij.com/cd_profile_main.php?id=46&cat=9

⁵ *Ibid.*, 4.

Figure 1: Johan De Meij, *T-bone Concerto* 'Rare,' mm. 60-64.⁶



Interestingly, this rhythmic ostinato is present throughout the rest of the movement in various iterations with slight alterations to the reoccurring ostinato in the rest of the 'Rare' movement. This sixteen-bar gesture is comprised mainly of eighth notes followed by two sixteenth notes in four bar phrases with *mezzoforte* dynamics; however, in m. 64 the gesture is punctuated with a flourishing scale. The four-bar pattern repeats itself and is concluded by two sets of triplets. The next eight bars builds to the exciting climax of the musical statement from mm. 70-76, and concluding with a bombastic and articulate ending.⁷

M. 80 starts the second iteration of the opening statement where the tonal centricity shifts from D minor to F minor and the rhythmic ostinato remains static and follows in similar fashion to the opening solo statement. However, there appears to be slight deviations from the four bar phrases established in the opening solo statement. These differences can be viewed in figure 2.

⁶ Johan De Meij, *T-bone Concerto for Trombone and Piano*, (Netherlands: Amstel Music, 1996), 1.

⁷ De Meij, *T-bone Concerto for Trombone and Piano* 1.

Figure 2. Johan De Meij, *T-bone Concerto*, 'Rare,' mm. 82-87.⁸



The deviations of the first gesture occur in mm. 83 and 87 where two scalar flourishes appear followed by a crescendo starting in m. 89. The two-triplet motivic idea reappears. In m. 95, an E major scale is present and is followed shortly afterwards with a descending scalar pattern bringing resolving back to D minor with a boisterous ending consisting of a trilled D to F on the trombone with a *decrescendo*.

Next, transitional material segues into the contrasting *a' Tranquillo* section of the work which is starkly dichotomous from the technically demanding opening of the 'Rare' movement. The soloist reenters the composition at m. 134 where the sensual *legato cantabile* section tests the soloist's ability to play delicately and powerfully, but also tests the soloist's aptitude to navigate the various rhythmic combinations of eighth notes, sixteenth notes, triplets, and hemiolas in a plethora of permutations. This section of the composition consists of many tempo changes.⁹

The following rhythmic gestures and tempi changes creates a section of the composition that is another challenging section of the work; however, these rhythmic and tempi variations function as the mortar to build to another climatic point in the composition. The melodic material of m. 167 is derived from previous measures of this section, specifically mm. 151 and 153. Interestingly, the slurred triplets help create the rubato effect which consequently evolves into

⁸ De Meij, *T-bone Concerto for Trombone and Piano* 2.

⁹ De Meij, *T-bone Concerto for Trombone and Piano* 3.

the climax at m. 167 because of the utilization of the same notes for the melodic content (see figures 3 and 4).

Figure 3. Johan De Meij, *T-bone Concerto*, 'Rare,' mm.151 and 153.¹⁰



Figure 4. Johan De Meij, *T-bone Concerto*, 'Rare,' m.167.¹¹



Embellishments then saturate the melody as the soloist reaches the pinnacle of this section, which develops into soaring octave intervallic leaps. Attached to these musical apexes of the section the highest points are articulated with tenuto markings to add to the sumptuousness of the melodic gestures.

Four instances of soaring melodic gestures can be found until the *molto rallentando* which slowly *decrescendos* into m. 175. This section of the composition acts as intermediary material further delving into the push and pull of the rubato and slowing the tempo even further to sixty-three beats per minute descending chromatically and punctuated by a B natural where De Meij modulates to a minor key. This twelve-measure section of 'Rare' consists of sultry dynamics, scalar patterns, and arpeggi all in E minor. Moreover, turns are added as

¹⁰ De Meij, *T-bone Concerto for Trombone and Piano* 3.

¹¹ De Meij, *T-bone Concerto for Trombone and Piano* 3.

embellishments to two of the four patterns that add variants to the scales and arpeggios concluding on G4. A brief recess occurs for the soloist and to concludes the twelve-bar section where another tempo transition occurs harkening back to the *tranquillo* section m.127 in cut time.

Similarly, the next section of the composition contains many of the same rhythmic variations found previously in the work with a change in tonal centricity. Many of the same aspects of the composition remain consistent, including rhythm, articulation, and tempo. The soaring melodic gesture also returns once again utilizing the octave leaps and slowly concluding via *rallentando* which transitions into C minor. Measure 222 starts new transitional material. Interestingly, the composition modulates to another minor mode again and the soloist reenters muted, staccato, and playing eighth note gestures composed mainly of fourths. Utilizing *stringendo* and *crescendos* in order to create tension, De Meij returns to the faster technical restatements of the opening soloistic technical material in mm. 60-76. The transitional material of this section remains consistent with the various rhythmic permutations of eighth note, triplet, and sixteenth note combinations before accelerating into a two bar sixteenth note flourish at mm. 254-255. They are punctuated by harsh articulations F- sharp⁴ to B natural⁴ where the muted solo section concludes.

The conclusion of 'Rare' restates the opening soloistic technical passages to conclude the first movement. The composition modulates to F minor identically to the second soloistic statement. De Meij's composition remains constant until m. 304 where he composes an ascending scale and modulates into the key of F major the relative of F minor in m. 305. This deviation adds variety in the composition and acts as a way to modulate back into the D minor mode where the composition resolves in the similar boisterous manner circa m. 75.

After eleven measures of rest, the piano ushers in the new key of G minor and crescendoing for five measures where similar rhythmic material is presented to the soloist. De Meij includes two sixteenth note runs one with thirty-second notes and crescendoing to fortissimo B-flat5. The first movement concludes in a jarring technical fashion where triplet sixteenth notes are added to the unwavering sixteenth note rhythms of the composition. 'Rare' concludes the A section on an accented C5 bringing the robust first movement of the *T-Bone Concerto* to a close.

Movement II, 'Medium' is the lyrical interim of the concerto and follows an A-B-A form similar to movement I. 'Medium' opens in 3/4 time with a much more restrained at a tempo of sixty-three beats per minute. 'Medium' simmers in the key B-flat major strictly with accompaniment for the first ten measures. The soloist then enters the composition in m. 11 at a *mezzo piano* dynamic playing in a dolce manner, this section is divided into four bar phrases clearly indicated with breath marks in order to ensure that there are no breaks in playing said phrases. This reinforces the concept of playing phrases in an undisrupted sweet manner. Interestingly, m.19 then modulates into D-flat major. In m. 27 De Meij increases his tempo to 72 beats per minute and calls for the playing to become more animated than previously noted. The D-flat major soloistic material continues until m. 31 where another modulation takes place, this time to A major. Additionally, this section contains tenuto markings unlike the previous melodic material found earlier in the movement. I believe these articulation help signify a definitive end to the A section with weighted tenuto punctuation. This small intermediate section occupies eight bars and concludes at m. 39 and modulates back to D-flat major.

Measure 48, or the B section of the movement shifts from 3/4 to 6/8-time *allegretto* dotted quarter note equals 66 and helps establish a lilting noble jaunt in m. 52 (see figure 5).

Figure 5. Johan De Meij, *T-bone Concerto*, ‘Medium,’ m. 52.¹²



This motivic material remains consistent with only slight alterations in musical content s through various key centers, including D minor, D Major, C minor. Unlike the A section of ‘Medium,’ De Meij increases the dynamics of the solo to *mezzo forte* as a way to build tension, contrast. This ultimately leads to the zenith of the B playing *fortissimo* dynamics at m. 111. De Meij then modulates to F minor and concludes with a meter change and shift back to the A material in m.145. Here the *mezzo piano dolce* gesture reappears starting in D major and ultimately concludes in F major where the soloist concludes ‘Medium’ on a C5. The accompaniment finishes the movement giving the soloist a reprieve and gearing up for the final movement of the *T-bone Concerto*, ‘Well Done.’

‘Well Done’ is the virtuosic conclusion of the *T-bone Concerto* featuring a return of much of the compositional content from the first two movements. In John Vandewaa’s doctoral dissertation *Modern Dutch Composers for the Solo Trombone*, he states, “the ‘Neo-Baroque’ style that De Meij is referring to is a reference to the presence of the harpsichord in the third movement, rather than a reference to any particular formal approach.”¹³ The *allegro moderato* sets the tempo similarly to the solo entrance tempo of ‘Rare’ and the soloist enters the composition at m. 35 at *mezzo forte*. Interestingly, none of the notes are marked *staccato*, but I

¹² De Meij, *T-bone Concerto for Trombone and Piano* 8.

¹³ Arie John Vandewaa, “Modern Dutch Composers for The Solo Trombone” (PhD diss., University of Alabama, 2017), 10.

believe that due to the technical requirements of this section, playing in a detached manner greatly helps the soloist navigate the demanding sixteenth note patterns that are interlaced throughout the entire composition. In similar regards many of the same technical demands appear in ‘Well Done’ much like ‘Rare’ sixteenth notes, eighth notes, triplets, and combinations of all three permeate the opening solo part sticking to the primarily to the mid-range of the trombone concluding at m. 55. Once again, the soloist has a sixteen-bar respite and re-enters in m. 76 of the composition playing consistent eighth notes (see figure 6).

Figure 6. Johan De Meij, *T-bone Concerto*, ‘Well done,’ m. 76.¹⁴



De Meij creates intervallic eighth note lines primarily utilizing fourths bridged across bar lines with a seconds or fifths. A *calmando* marks m. 90 and an angular line helps transition the composition into m. 92 which revisits the dolce material found in mm. 31-39 of ‘Medium.’ De Meij continues reinventing the material of the dolce section first heard in ‘Medium,’ however, he augments the melodic material by composing in the key of D minor again. Much like the pervious material he modulates to D-flat major and concludes this section at m. 123 with an *accelerando* and *crescendo* to m.123. I believe that De Meij purposely included the already used melodic material as a way to harken back to the previous content of the composition and clearly punctuates his thematical ideas in the finale of the concerto.

De Meij revisits the opening soloist melody from m. 35 of ‘Well Done’ only this time it is in the key of B-flat major. This statement is substantially shorter as a second ending is not

¹⁴ De Meij, *T-bone Concerto for Trombone and Piano* 12.

included. This section though modulates to D major until m. 191. In m. 201 an *accelerando* happens as ‘Well Done’ flourishes virtuosically to ending bar of m. 218. M. 203 starts the 12/ 8 vivace section dotted quarter note equals 144.

De Meij calls for this impressive technical conclusion to be played staccato in order for the pitches to be heard and sound, but also to keep the brisk tempo manageable. The soloist enters at m. 205 playing similar melodic content to m. 76 in ‘Well Done,’ but much more vibrantly than before where it grows to fortissimo at m. 209 and accents the four C5s in the final bars of the composition. The C5 is then held for approximately four bars until the *tutta forza!* At m. 214, De Meij concludes his composition by having the trombone soloist play and sustain a jarring F5 for the final three bars of the *T-bone Concerto*.

It is without question that the *T-bone Concerto* contains many advanced technical passages, range demands, endurance concerns, and compartmentalizing the different rhythmic variations of the composition. Despite the challenges presented in this particular composition, it is worth noting how pedagogy can aid a performer in accomplishing the exceedingly arduous challenges the *T-bone Concerto* presents to the performer. When examining the opening technical passage starting at m. 61. Many resources can be utilized in order to overcome and make the challenges of the opening less daunting. Arie John Vandewaa’s doctoral dissertation *Modern Dutch Composers for the Solo Trombone*. Vandewaa states De Meij’s origins as a trombone student become apparent with a strong thematic similarity to several of Jean Baptiste Arban’s “Studies on Dotted Eighth and Sixteenth Notes” (see figures 7 and 8).¹⁵

¹⁵Vandewaa, 11.

Figure 7. *Arban's Complete Method*, “Studies in Dotted Eight and Sixteenth Notes,” Exercise 19, mm.1-3.¹⁶



Figure 8. Johan De Meij, *T-bone Concerto*, ‘Rare,’ mm. 60-64.¹⁷



Playing Arban exercises may prepare the performer rhythmically for the ostinato that can be found throughout the entire composition. Additionally, the tempo of ‘Rare’ m. 61 is *tempo giusto* quarter note equals 116-120. Bob McChesney, author of *Technical Studies for Trombone* states:

A helpful technique for learning a scale, a pattern or any difficult fast technical passage is to begin practice with only a few of the notes, and then add a note, one at a time to the group, until you are playing all of the passage. This is called “incremental practicing” or “chaining”. The passage can be practiced at, or near the desired fast tempo since there is only one new note added each time to learn. The Brain is able to thoroughly absorb the material when it is presented this step by step way. This is more effective way of learning than the traditional method of practicing and then incrementally speeding it up. Slow playing is different in the brain than fast playing, and practicing at or near the desired fast tempo is the best way to prepare for performance¹⁸.

¹⁶ Charles L. Randall and Simone Mantia, eds., *Arban's Famous Method for Trombone* (New York: Carl Fischer, 2008), 35.

¹⁷ Johan De Meij, *T-bone Concerto for Trombone and Piano* (Netherlands: Amstel Music, 1996), 1.

¹⁸ Bob McChesney, *Technical Studies for Trombone* (Easton, MD: Chesapeake Music, 2014), 8.

This particular insight allows for the performer to play the technical scalar patterns of the entire concerto at a much more desired tempo and significantly circumvents the what could be a long drawn out process that can be significantly reduced making practicing more efficient. Once mastered the trombonist can move on to other challenging technical gestures found throughout the concerto.

Many of the technical gestures found throughout the concerto are often prefaced with *leggiero* articulation. “The usual method of articulating notes that are not in very rapid succession is single-tonguing and players employ levels of intensity of tonguing appropriate to the music that is being performed. Good players can play very rapid passages by single-tonguing.”¹⁹ In order to perform the concerto with the best tone quality possible it behooves the trombonist to single tongue many of the technical passages and strive for the cleanest tone and slide movement as possible. Many of the demanding technical passages are repeated throughout the rest of the composition, so once one section is learned it can be applied to the rest of the composition. Additionally, it is also benefits the trombonist to follow the *leggiero* articulation markings in order to successfully play certain technical passages deftly without adding any extra weight in articulating notes. Furthermore, articulating adroitly like the opening solo melodic gesture helps navigate other technically demanding passages such as the triplet gestures and conclusion in movement III, “Well Done.”

In regards to performance considerations, range is another substantial aspect to the *T-bone Concerto* as the concerto utilizes the full range of the instrument, A pedal tone to F5. For instance in movement II the lyrical sections of the composition are similar to the vocalises of

¹⁹ Herbert Trevor, *The Trombone* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006), 41.

Marco Bordogni.²⁰ Etude Number 10 mimics the jaunty nature of “Medium” as shown in figures 9 and 10.

Figure 9. *Melodious Etudes for Trombone* Etude Number 10, “Andante Pastorale,” mm.47-50.²¹



Figure 10. Johan De Meij, *T-bone Concerto*, ‘Medium,’ m. 52.²²



Furthermore, the tempos of both Etude Number 10 and ‘Medium’ are similar as well as the centricities and contrasting dynamics of both compositions. In order to achieve maximum effectiveness in issuing the range demands of the composition, one should alter the clef of Etude Number 10 and read as though it were in tenor clef. This technique allows for the trombonist to enhance his clef reading skills, play in the similar style and keys of the piece, build endurance in the higher range of the instrument, and develop the smooth lyrical playing that can be found in all three movements of the *T-bone Concerto*.

Lastly, Arnold Jacobs pedagogical concept of “song and wind” can greatly aid in manifesting a successful performance, especially with such a substantial composition. Jacobs

²⁰ Vandewaa, 13.

²¹ Alan Raph, ed., *Melodious Etudes for Trombone*, book 1, Nos. 1-60 (New York: Carl Fischer 2011), 13.

²² De Meij, *T-bone Concerto for Trombone and Piano* 8.

states, “When the horn is up to the lips, forget mechanics and be a storyteller of sound. Think of musical tone from the very first note; fill your head with sound. Imitate a “singing voice” sounding loudly in your head. Think of a great performance, not what you’re doing.”²³

Cultivating this particular mindset alleviates the daunting mechanical characteristics of the *T-bone Concerto*, allowing the performer to indulge in being story teller. It is ultimately up to the performer to sing the story through the horn and let it be driven by air.

De Meij’s *T-bone Concerto* is an excellent composition in cultivating a trombonist’s versatility because of how many musical aspects it tests and fortifies technical playing, lyrical playing, and endurance. These three aspects will allow a trombonist to blend into performance environments that call for such demands. Additionally, the rhythmic combinations found throughout the *T-bone Concerto* enhance the performers ability to subdivide difficult rhythms. Furthermore, it also acquaints the trombonist with concerto form and neo-baroque style and provides experience in the sphere of classical contemporary compositions. This particular piece enhances many aspects of one’s playing which could lead to more performance yielding experiences, thus, heightening a trombonist’s overall versatility.

²³ Bruce Nelson, comp., *Also Sprach Arnold Jacobs: A Developmental Guide for Brass Wind Musicians* (Mindelheim, Germany: Polymnia Press, 2006), 22.

CHAPTER 2

MICHAEL DAVIS MISSION RED

Versatility in styles, specifically jazz and commercial playing can be an excellent addition in the trombonist's arsenal in regards to generating performance opportunities. It goes without being said, that in order to navigate the such a demanding, compounding, and complex environment it is imperative that a modern-day trombonist be well versed in different styles in order to see success as a musician. Michael Davis's *Mission Red* is significant in examining the jazz and commercial idiom as well as exposing the performer to electronic accompaniment. "Trombonist and composer Michael Davis has enjoyed a diverse and acclaimed career. [Over his career Davis has] released nine solo recordings, composed over 150 works, authored ten books, and appeared on over 500 CDs and motion picture soundtracks."²⁴ Davis's diverse catalog of works has allowed him to operate in various musical environments and has launched himself as a well-known name in the music world.

"Davis was born to a musical family in San Francisco, CA on August 13, 1961, [and his] early musical studies included the piano, drums, tuba baritone horn. and electric bass. Settling on the trombone in high school his collegiate career commenced at the prestigious Eastman School of Music in the fall of 1979."²⁵ His musical accolades quickly spread around his milieu and he eventually found himself gravitating closer to New York City. "Davis's freelance career in New York City began in earnest in 1986. As a testimony to his versatility and wide regard, the list of jazz and pop luminaries he has worked with includes: Michael Jackson, Bob Dylan, Aerosmith,

²⁴ Michael Davis, *Bone Kill-15 Etudes and 5 Suites for Trombone* (Nanuet, NY: Hip-Bone Music, 2012).

²⁵ Ibid., 24.

Jay Z, Sting, Sheryl Crow, and Paul Simon.”²⁶ Although not a common household name, it is quite apparent that Davis’s versatility populates various genre idioms including classic rock, hip-hop, R&B, and alternative. Furthermore, such a diverse catalog of artists also indicates that Davis’s playing spans across many disciplines, generations, and also shows a keen awareness of how these genres have been revised throughout history.

Davis maintains his own jazz groups and projects through Hip-Bone Music.²⁷ Davis acts as a content creator for his website where he conducts interviews with many renown musicians of the era, including Alan Ferber, Jim Self, Joeseeph Alessi, and Ryan Keberle. Furthermore, Davis also includes arranging, composing supplements, and method books to further develop students’ interests in the jazz idiom. Ultimately, Davis looks to provide students and teachers alike with an unparalleled brass resource.

Mission Red is described by Davis on his website as “fiery and intense, with modern synth sounds and textures.”²⁸ This composition was commissioned by Dr. John Marcellus of the Eastman School of Music and is featured on the compact disc *Songs, Dances, and Incantations*.²⁹ This piece was composed for solo trombone and electronics with CD accompaniment. Evan J. Conroy, author of *The Modern Bass Trombone Repertoire: An Annotated List and Pedagogical Guide*, states “electronic accompaniment is a big aspect of Davis’ solo and ensemble

²⁶ Michael Davis, *Bone Kill-15 Etudes and 5 Suites for Trombone* (Nanuet, NY: Hip-Bone Music, 2012).

²⁷ Hip-Bone Music, accessed January 22, 2019, <https://hip-bonemusic.com/>.

²⁸ *Mission Red* for Solo Trombone with CD Accompaniment, accessed January 23, 2019. <https://hip-bonemusic.com/collections/music-for-trombone/products/mission-red-trombone-solo-with-cd-accompaniment>

²⁹ Michael Davis, “Mission Red,” *Songs Dances and Incantations*, Albany Records, 2003, CD.

compositions and has since expanded on music with electronic accompaniment with *Blackhawk*, or as Davis explains is the big brother of *Mission Red*.³⁰

Mission Red is in one movement, a repeated section followed by a coda, which creates an amalgamation of most of the melodic content. It begins in 6/4, quarter note equaling 200 beats per minute. Opening with electronic accompaniment for eight bars, the solo trombone begins in m. 9, playing at a *mezzo forte* dynamic. The opening solo trombone line coalesces into an eighth note gesture. It is repeated again at m. 14, but is slightly altered in pitch. The following eight bars provides new material including a slurred sixteenth note slurred gesture and a descending gesture composed of thirds spanning an octave. The opening section is written in D minor and is divided into eight bar phrases contrasting in various dynamics (see figure 11).

Figure 11. Mike Davis, ‘*Mission Red*,’ mm. 25-32.³¹



Similar motivic ideas can be found later in the composition in mm. 145, 221, and 240. The contrasting dynamics in the A section gives the listener a diverse sonic experience and the *pianissimo* dynamics functions to transitions into the lyrical material at m. 33 which modulates to Bb major³².

The lyrical section of *Mission Red* divulges from the technical work of the A section. The composition remains grounded in the fast tempo and articulates the eighth and quarter notes to

³⁰ Evan J. Conroy, *The Modern Bass Trombone Repertoire: An Annotated List and Pedagogical Guide*, PhD diss., Indiana University, 2018, 28.

³¹ Michael Davis *Mission Red* (Hip-Bone Music, 1994), 1.

³² Davis, 1.

keep stylistic concerns consistent. This transitional material is then repeated; mm. 33-50 function as a precursor to the legato transitional section. Additionally, mm. 53-76 are indicative to the previous section, the changes in key centers drives the composition to a new section starting at m. 77.

Measure 77 characteristically remains consistently lyrical with juxtaposing dynamics that culminates into the zenith of the section. Measure 103 starts at *forte* and Davis includes recurrent syncopated rhythms that conclude on two B3 natural whole notes. Additionally, due to the accidentals of this section the tonal center shifts to D major and the section is then repeated before moving into familiar gestural territory in m. 111.

Interestingly, Davis revisits melodic material found earlier in the composition in which he utilizes three eight note gestures that are staggered on different beats. Moreover, he then circles back to a melodic gesture reminiscent of the opening material of the composition. Similar to m. 111, m. 115 harkens back to the eight note gestures where a *decrescendo* diminishes until revitalized with a *crescendo* in m. 118 where he concludes this particular statement on a dotted half note B naturals.

The soloist rests for eight bars and does not enter until the upbeat of m. 127 where he displaces the melodic content of mm. 104-106 by an octave, but accented harshly followed by a descending scalar pattern. The syncopated quarter notes are then restated before concluding this section with an eighth note gesture filled with glisses fluctuating between C5 and B5 until concluding on E- natural 4. Similar gestures permeate the composition from mm. 143-to 158 as the open solo section begins at m. 179.

Davis notates the first sixteen bars as soloing freely and then provides ambiguous guideposts for the soloist every eight bars. For instance, Davis indicates E pedal at m. 195, G pedal at m. 203, and Eb sus at m. 211 before returning to the D.S. al coda which revisits the

legato section at m. 53 and concludes at m. 110. Based on evidence provided in the recording in *Songs, Dances, and Incantations*, Davis uses the accompaniment of the electronics and muted brass to utilize elements of call and response. This showcases a unique way to utilize electronics which adds a more organic element to the digital and often times mechanical electronics.³³ Interestingly, Davis's solo contains small melodic fragments derived from the melody of the composition. These fragments help reinforce a more humanizing characteristic to the solo section of the work.

As a composer, Davis concludes *Mission Red* with a coda section which is interspersed with much of the melodic content found throughout the composition. This includes the three eighth-note gestures found from mm. 41-44, 111-115, and 143-150 along with the *decrescendo* and *crescendo* marks which concludes in m. 227. The next eight bars revisits the syncopated offbeat section a la measure mm. 127-132 displaced by an octave and finishing *fortissimo*. The last five bars of the composition, mm. 240-244, restates the opening gesture from m. 9 and ends with two whole notes and a dotted half note tied together as the composition closes.

There are many hurdles to overcome in Davis' composition; however, due to Davis being a seasoned composer and trombonist, he utilizes the harmonic series of the trombone to carefully navigate the deft melodic figures of *Mission Red*. As a performer, we can find many instances in which Davis utilizes the harmonic series in order to create melodic lines that are challenging, are idiomatic to the trombone. In this specific case a particular etude Davis created for *Total Trombone* can address many of the concerns a performer may face in the challenge *Mission Red*, entitled 'Low Register' this etude consists of similar time signatures, clever use of overtones,

³³ Michael Davis, "Mission Red," *Songs Dances and Incantations*, Albany Records, 2003. CD.

articulations, tempo, and melodic gestures nearly identical to those found in *Mission Red* (see figure 12).

Figure 12. Mike Davis, *Total Trombone*, “Low Register,” mm. 45-48.³⁴



Another challenge that a trombonist faces in regards to preparing *Mission Red* is making sure timing between the soloist and electronics is impeccable. Because of the electronic accompaniment and fast tempo of the composition, if a strong sense of time and pulse is not established it could diminish otherwise what might be an incredibly successful performance. Bob McChesney states, “the most important aspect of any musical performance is time. It sits at the top of the hierarchy of music. No amazingly beautiful tone, incredible high range, fast execution, or any other musical skill will make up for a performance with bad time.”³⁵ Utilizing a metronome can help the trombonist develop a durable sense of time and land a successful performance with electronic accompaniment, however, other methodologies reveal that there are ways to improve time to get an exact and precise result. McChesney states, “in order to improve your time practice playing behind the beat. Pay attention to how this feels... then do the same playing ahead of the beat. By practicing behind or ahead, you will improve your sensitivity to the time.”³⁶ When using this technique in performance practice, the trombonist will not only

³⁴ Michael Davis, *Total Trombone* (Nanuet, NY: Hip-Bone Music, 2001), 14.

³⁵ Bob McChesney, *Technical Studies for Trombone* (Easton, MD: Chesapeake Music, 2014), 5.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 35.

establish solid timing when accompanied by electronics, but also improve his timing in other performance environments.

Mission Red is a worthy candidate in examining and cultivating a versatile skill set. This particular composition exposes the trombonist to jazz and commercial style. Furthermore, it allows the trombonist to be exposed to performing with electronic accompaniment which is becoming more and more popular in performance settings due to the expansive rate in which technology interacts with our lives. Uniquely, the open solo section of *Mission Red* allows for the performer to hone their improvisation skills which is also a demand of a modern versatile musician. Although, the solo section is loose by traditional standards, without chord changes, the solo section demands good timing with electronic accompaniment and allows for some exceptional interplay with call and response in mind. The idiomatic vernacular and unique nature of this piece showcases Davis's grasp of jazz and commercial playing and is why he remains one of the most sought-after musicians in the trombone scene.

CHAPTER 3

JOHANNES BRAHMS FOUR SERIOUS SONGS

The modern trombonist's repertoire is expansive and everchanging. With various new techniques and idioms being developed across many genres, ensembles, and chamber groups, the possibilities of new compositions seem endless. However, in an addition to many new emerging compositions, vocal transcriptions have also become an important hallmark in trombone repertoire. Performing vocal transcriptions expose, to expose the trombonist to new a new collection of works, but also a new body of works that further expand a player's versatility. Vocal transcriptions such as Johannes Brahms's *Vier ernste Gesänge*, or *Four Serious Songs*, have quickly permeated the trombonist's lexicon presenting unique challenges such as emulating a vocalist's inflection, phrasing, and expressing a textual narrative on the trombone.

Johannes Brahms was born on May 7th 1833 and was a German composer and pianist. Born in Hamburg into a Lutheran family, Brahms spent much of his professional life in Vienna, Austria.³⁷ Brahms was able to develop in this musical mecca of Vienna during the Romantic era and launch an incredible successful career as a composer and pianist. "Brahms was the great master of symphonic and sonata style in the second half of the nineteenth century. He can be viewed as the protagonist of the Classical tradition of Joseph Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven in a period when the standards of this tradition [was] being overturned by the Romantics."³⁸ "It was the premiere of [*Ein Deutsches Requiem*] ... that confirmed Brahms's European reputation. This may have given him the confidence finally to complete a number of works that he had

³⁷ "Johannes Brahms," Music Appreciation Late Romantic Era, accessed February 5, 2019. <https://courses.lumenlearning.com/sanjacinto-musicapp-1/chapter/Johannes-brahms/>

³⁸ Karl Geiringer, "Johannes Brahms German Composer," accessed February 5, 2019. <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Johannes-Brahms>

wrestled with over many years most notable his first symphony.”³⁹

“Brahms was a lifelong Lutheran Protestant, with a profound knowledge of the Bible, but he had a secular education and did not attend church regularly.”⁴⁰ Brahms incorporated religious elements and themes in many of compositions despite being considered agnostic. “Brahms’s sacred music and spiritually informed secular works are strongly marked by his German identity and with early and increasing emphasis, his Protestant upbringing.”⁴¹

Brahms composed *Four Serious Songs* in May of 1896. Contrary to popular belief, *Four Serious Songs* was not composed for Brahms’s love interest Clara Schumann. They were composed for himself for his birthday.⁴² Contextually, these songs were written as a way for Brahms to grapple with religion and death. They act as an ode to mortality. Each one of the songs correspond with sacred Biblical text. The first two songs draw from Ecclesiastes, the third song draws from Ecclesiasticus from the Apocrypha, and the fourth draws from I Corinthians in the New Testament. “Even though all of the texts are Biblical and deal with life and spirituality, there is not one mention of God or Christ, which is significant for understanding Brahms’s view of religion and spirituality.”⁴³

³⁹ "Johannes Brahms," Music Appreciation Late Romantic Era, accessed February 5, 2019. <https://courses.lumenlearning.com/sanjacinto-musicapp-1/chapter/johannes-brahms/>

⁴⁰ Walter Frisch, *Music in the Nineteenth Century* (New York: W.w. Norton & Company, 2013), 178.

⁴¹ Daniel Beller-Mckenna, *Brahms and the German Spirit* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004), 32.

⁴² Walter Frisch, ed., *Brahms and His World* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1990), 177.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 41.

The first song opens in D minor utilizing an ascending and descending scalar pattern. Song one's text comes from Ecclesiastes, chapter 3, verses 19-22. The scripture states "For that which befallerth the sons of men befallerth beasts, as the one dieth, so dieth the other."⁴⁴ Through text painting of the ascending and descending scalar patterns, Brahms indicates man returning to the Earth in his final resting place. The first song indicates the somber tone of the composition which remains consistent until the fourth song. Anthony L. Weikel III author of "Brahms' *Four Serious Songs*: Arranged for Trombone and String Orchestra," states "in [mm.] 50 -55 Brahms uses an ascending musical line when the text asks 'Who knoweth if the spirit of man goeth upward,' and then uses a descending musical line in mm. 64 - 72 to finish the question, 'the spirit if the beast that goeth downward to earth?'"⁴⁵ In the thematical material presented in the first song, Brahms compares the destinies of man and beast and that they will both return to the Earth once they perish. "Brahms concludes with an open fifth harmony to suggest this longing and empty feeling in mm. 96-97. An open fifth is one of the most significant way to depict musical uncertainty, and Brahms inserts it just as this hollow question is asked."⁴⁶

The second song opens with descending third intervals which text paints the idea of death. This song is based on Ecclesiastes, chapter 4, verses 1-3. The second song further wrestles with the idea of death in a more macabre manner. Overall, the text "celebrates the dead and

⁴⁴Lyndon H. LaRouche, Jr., "Getting Brahms's Idea Across in "Vier Ernste *Gesänge*", "The Schiller Institute, August 2002, accessed April 2, 2019. https://archive.schillerinstitute.com/lar_related/2002/lar_brahms_8-02.html.

⁴⁵ Weikel Anthony, L "Brahms' Four Serious Songs: Arranged for Trombone and String Quartet," diss., Ohio State University (2015).

⁴⁶ Ibid., 45.

forces the sadness for the unjust suffering of the innocent: ‘So I returned, and considered all the oppressions that are done under the sun.’”⁴⁷

The second song further articulates the theme of death throughout the composition. It paints an incredibly grim perspective of life. “Therefore, I praised the dead which are already dead more than the living which are yet alive. And he who does not exist is better off than both.”⁴⁸ On top of the ghoulish text of the second song lies a message of anti-natalism that those who are unborn are better off than those who are brought into the world to only suffer and die. “The phrase is set off by a measure long pause, the tessitura is low in both the voice and accompaniment, and the initial note is a leading tone, A#, to the B natural, a strong but defiant sound.”⁴⁹ Compositionally, once Brahms is done contemplating this idea in his composition it seems to be resolved by shifting centricity to G major and departs from the macabre musical landscape.

In the third song, Brahms utilizes text from the book of Ecclesiasticus which is located in the Apocrypha, or books that operate outside of the canonical Bible scriptures. Compositionally, Brahms continues examining the theme of mortality, but intersperses the third song by changing keys to add disparity. The third song opens in the key of E minor which is virulent and boisterous stating “Oh, death, oh death, how bitter you are.” In m. 18, Brahms shifts to the key of E major where an austere contrast occurs and the text states “oh death, how welcome are you.” As observed, Brahms contemplates that there are two prescribed philosophies on death, either

⁴⁷ Weikel Anthony, L “Brahms’ Four Serious Songs: Arranged for Trombone and String Quartet,” diss., Ohio State University (2015).

⁴⁸ Lyndon H. LaRouche, Jr., “Getting Brahms’s Idea Across in “Vier Ernste *Gesänge*”, “The Schiller Institute, August 2002, accessed April 2, 2019. https://archive.schillerinstitute.com/lar_related/2002/lar_brahms_8-02.html.

⁴⁹ Ibid., 47.

death is bitter or death is a welcoming end to existence due to suffering. This further reinforces the contrasting death ideals. The third song concludes serenely punctuating the acceptance of death and the transcendental experience of leaving the terrestrial realm.

Brahms concludes the cycle in the fourth song with a much less morose vision of death. The final movement is taken from I Corinthians, chapter 13, verses 1-3 and 12-13. A contrast in song four is immediately recognized as this movement begins in a much more vivacious temperament that strays from the glum embrace of death. The translated text states “Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.”⁵⁰ In m. 48, Brahms modulates to the key of B major. The *adagio* section of mm. 48-75 contrasts from the lively opening section of song four in both tempo and dynamics. “Brahms seems to be recalling the intense moment of the second song mm. 56- 60, where Brahms uses the A-sharp leading tone to B natural.”⁵¹ Brahms modulates back to E-flat major and the song concludes with the text “And now abideth faith, hope, agape (love), these three but the greatest of these is agape (love).”⁵² Brahms is looking for solace and catharsis in this final song, letting love deliver him from a death filled fate.

Four Serious Songs presents many unique challenges to a trombonist. Although, not technically demanding in the traditional sense. The difficulty therein lies with mimicking the human voice on the instrument. “Traditional tonguing is a “tu” or “du,” ... as well be “ta” or

⁵⁰Lyndon H. LaRouche, Jr., “Getting Brahms’s Idea Across in “Vier Ernste *Gesänge*”, “The Schiller Institute, August 2002, accessed April 2, 2019. https://archive.schillerinstitute.com/lar_related/2002/lar_brahms_8-02.html.

⁵¹ Weikel Anthony, L “Brahms’ Four Serious Songs: Arranged for Trombone and String Quartet,” diss., Ohio State University (2015).

⁵² Ibid., 51.

“da” (or “toh” or “doh” if the proper vowel were considered).”⁵³ Therefore to fully mimic the human voice it is imperative for the trombonist to fully grasp the elements of the text in order to convey the text through their instrument. Ultimately, the syllables are left to interpretation of the performer, but the various articulations can help emulate the human voice.

Another challenge that is presented in *Four Serious Songs* is emulating the phrasing when singing the songs. It is paramount that the trombonist does not break the fluid melodic lines found throughout the composition. Breath control is vital and, for the trombonist, taking a breath in the middle of a word retracts from the overall performance. In order to ensure a trombonist’s successes with mimicking the melodic lines of the text transcriptions breath control can ensure a successful performance of *Four Serious Songs*. Perhaps the most fundamental and important of all brass studies is the crescendo-diminuendo long-tone study (see figure 13).

Figure 13. Edward Kleinhammer, *The Art of Trombone Playing*, “The Breath, 19.”⁵⁴



Four Serious Songs has many contrasting dynamic changes and therefore this exercise also helps the performer adjust the contrasting dynamics quickly, effectively, and adding expression throughout a piece that is dramatically demanding.

⁵³ Stewart, Dempster, *The Modern Trombone: A Definition of its Idioms* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1979), 15.

⁵⁴ Edward Kleinhammer, *The Art of Trombone Playing* (Evanston, IL; Summy-Birchard Company, 1963), 19.

Brahms's *Four Serious Songs* presents the performing trombonist with unique hurdles. But, performing vocal transcriptions provide, a reprieve from canonical trombone repertoire and should not be glossed over when cultivating versatility. In regards to versatility, *Four Serious Songs* educates the trombonist into a niche style of playing which emulates the human voice through vocal transcription. This specific emulation can help the trombonist in many other facets of playing including phrasing and articulation which can then be applied to in much of the standard trombone canon.

Playing vocal transcriptions helps the trombonist foster the language of the Romantic idiom. Therefore, with this increased knowledge the trombonist can perpetuate more performance opportunities in his or her field. Versatility is in high demand due to the overall landscape of the music industry. One cannot simply focus on one particular style and genre and expect to survive in a climate that is interconnected due to the technological outlets we now possess at our fingertips. With the demands of musicianship constantly evolving, a modern-day trombonist and musician must combat the landscape with all resources necessary and cultivate a knowledge base of all styles and genres and *Four Serious Songs* is a worthy niche style that enhances the Romantic vernacular while adding to a trombonist's versatility.

CHAPTER 4

CLAUDE DEBUSSY THE GIRL WITH THE FLAXEN HAIR

In developing a versatile skill set, another pertinent avenue that a trombonist can explore is playing in chamber ensembles. Chamber groups are fantastic opportunities to develop independent performance. The skills developed in playing in a chamber group can then be utilized in other performance environments. Therefore, it is without question, a valuable musical endeavor that should be explored in the musical milieu, especially, when diversifying performing opportunities and cultivating versatility as a musician. Claude Debussy's "La Fille Aux Cheveux de Lin," "The Girl with the Flaxen Hair; originally written for piano, has become subject to many interpretations, including chamber ensembles and solo performance with piano accompaniment.

Claude Debussy was born on August 22, 1862 in Saint-Germain-en-Laye, France. Debussy began piano lessons at the age of seven. His talents soon became evident and at the age of ten Debussy entered the Paris conservatoire where he spent the next eleven years studying music.⁵⁵ As a result, Debussy started developing his distinct compositional voice, taking inspiration from the rampant impressionist and symbolist culture saturating the French landscape. Debussy's musical dialect consist of shimmering passages which create ambiguous tonality, use of parallel chords creating non-functional harmonies, utilization of whole-tone and pentatonic scales, and abrupt modulations.⁵⁶ It was these elements that made Debussy such a prolific composer and would lead to the inception of *Preludes I*. "Debussy began Book 1 in December 1909, finishing it two months later in February 1910; Book two was started in late

⁵⁵ "Debussy: Biography," Music Appreciation 20th Century, accessed February 15, 2019. https://courses.lumenlearning.com/musicapp_historical/chapter/debussy/

⁵⁶ Ibid., 55.

1912 and finished in April 1913.”⁵⁷ This collection of works has been studied the world over by pianists and musicians alike and has become a definitive resource in the piano repertoire. In 1909, shortly before completing *Preludes I*, Debussy was diagnosed with cancer and later died at his Paris home on March 25, 1918, at the age of fifty-five.⁵⁸ Debussy’s legacy has remained relevant in the musical sphere where theorists and performers have carefully scrutinized every note of Debussy’s music.

The eighth composition in Debussy’s *Preludes I*, titled “La fille aux cheveux de lin,” sonically reimagines the poem written by Charles-Marie-Rene Leconte de Lisle. “A maiden sits in the sun and the poet pleads with her to kiss her flaxen hair and cherry red lips”.⁵⁹ Captivatingly, the thematical material of “La Fille Aux Cheveux de Lin” is inherently Romantic, as the protagonist poet longs for the love of the maiden symbolized in the composition. Although the composition harkens back to the Romantic era, Debussy was able to infuse this composition with his own idiomatic aspects as a result of aesthetic movements suturing the French culture at the turn of the modern era. Debussy is often viewed as a transitional figure in the Romantic epoch, bridging the gap between the Romantic era and Modern era.

Craig Kaucher’s brass quartet arrangement of “The Girl with the Flaxen Hair” opens with the second trumpet gently and expressively playing the melody, the first trumpet and first and second trombone, provide harmonic reinforcement.⁶⁰ The piece opens with the arpeggiated melody shown in figure 14.

⁵⁷ Maureen Buja, “Debussy: Preludes I, “Interlude, May 19, 2017, accessed March 3, 2019. <https://www.interlude.hk/front/debussy-preludes/>.

⁵⁸ Ibid., 57.

⁵⁹ Ibid., 57.

⁶⁰ Claude Debussy arr. Craig Kaucher, “The Girl with the Flaxen Hair (New London, CT: Cimarron Music Press, 2007), 1.

Figure 14. Claude Debussy arr. Craig Kaucher, “The Girl with the Flaxen Hair,” mm. 1-2.⁶¹



Robert E. Schmitz, author of *The Piano Works of Claude Debussy* states, “[the] eighth-sixteenth-sixteenth note pattern, sounds bright and flowing, as if to give the impression of a spring morning or a babbling brook establishing the setting for the scene.”⁶² Richard Trythall states, in *Observations on Debussy’s “Girl with the Flaxen Hair,”* “that there lies a balance of movement and repose harmonically, i.e., the cadences are often as long as the preparation for the cadence and are also points of important melodic activity.”⁶³ This particular technique that Debussy utilizes functions as intermediary flowing material in order to further conjure flowing hair wavy and flaxen, and create a balancing act throughout the composition and arrangement. The flowing melody reoccurs throughout to composition, in mm. 8-12, 19-22, and 29-32, passed off through the various instruments of the brass quartet. Consequently, this allows the melody to be juxtaposed with unique timbres and colors of trumpets and trombones.

⁶¹ Claude Debussy arr. Craig Kaucher, “The Girl with the Flaxen Hair (New London, CT: Cimarron Music Press, 2007), 1.

⁶² Robert E. Schmitz, *The Piano Works of Claude Debussy* (NY: Duell, Sloan and Pearce, 1950), 150.

⁶³ Richard Trythall, “Observations on Debussy’s “The Girl with the Flaxen Hair,” accessed March 5, 2019. <http://www.richardtrythall.com/Resources/10.ObservationsGirlFlaxenHair.pdf>.

The melodic gesture that begins the composition returns. The inverted motif in the quartet arrangement showcases this importance by having the quartet play this gesture unison before the B section of the arrangement m. 24. This reiterates the unique sensibilities of Debussy as he not only continues to paint a symbolist picture through music, but also harkens back to Romantic sensibilities.

Further analysis proves of another compositional technique that Debussy uses throughout this composition that strongly pairs poetically, elision. Richard Trythall states, “Elision is an important musical process, named after the same process in poetry. In music it occurs when the cadence chord of one phrase becomes, simultaneously, the first chord of the next phrase.”⁶⁴ In conjunction with the flowing nature of the composition, elision allows the composition to further fortify the flowing characteristics throughout the work and also the sense of longing that poet has for the maiden. Trythall states, “omitting the bar or more of repose normally allotted to the cadences of a phrase. Elision helps break “boxy” phrasing, and increases the listener’s appreciation of the cadence when it finally does arrive.”⁶⁵ This gives the unresolved cadential points allows the composition to become more free flowing. When examining the various permutations of the opening melodic gesture deduction reveals that like the tributary of stream, or a strand of hair similarities may exist, but each tributary, or hair, is unique. The use of elision helps to achieve this concept in the composition.

⁶⁴ Richard Trythall, “Observations on Debussy’s “The Girl with the Flaxen Hair,” accessed March 5, 2019. <http://www.richardtrythall.com/Resources/10.ObservationsGirlFlaxenHair.pdf>.

⁶⁵ Ibid., 64.

Debussy's compositional genius undoubtedly exists within "The Girl with the Flaxen Hair" as both a Romantic and Modernist composer. Many of the compositional aspects of such a brief work contains many dual functions and hybridizing the Romantic and Modernist genres of music. Debussy incorporates elements of longing and symbolism found within a simple flowing arpeggiated melody oftentimes unresolved and inverted to paint a sonic picture of young poet trying to win the heart of the flaxen hair maiden. All of this is accomplished in a succinct composition.

The quartet arrangement of "The Girl with the Flaxen Hair," although short, creates challenging tasks in order to be performed successfully in a chamber setting. In a composition that flows gracefully, there are moments where time can be altered in order to further enhance the flowing quasi-rubato characteristic of the composition. Therefore, according to Ava Ordman, trombonist of the Beaumont Brass Quintet suggests, "eye contact and body language can be very important in performing chamber music. Getting to know your colleagues' tendencies [establishes] consistent ensemble time, rhythm, and dynamics as well as breathing and phrasing can become second nature to the sensitive chamber music player."⁶⁶ Consistent ensemble time is imperative in a composition that is characterized as calm, gentle, or expressive, and with the added rubato liberties that Debussy is known for. In order to have a strong sense of time the opening breath of the composition can greatly help establish an ideal start to any chamber group composition.⁶⁷ Consistent ensemble time is crucial in order to manifest a successful performance because if one person's sense of time is inconsistent it could compromise the entire performance.

⁶⁶ Ava Ordman, "General Tips for Brass Quintets," accessed March 3, 2019. https://www.midwestclinic.org/user_files_1/pdfs/clinicianmaterials/2003/beaumont_brass.pdf.

⁶⁷ Ibid., 66.

Albert E Miller Junior's dissertation "Coaching the Brass Quintet: Developing better Student Musicians through Chamber Music" states, in order to maximize a quartet's performance effectiveness is critical self-reflection, or being able to objectively critique one's chamber ensemble to further heighten the performance. "The individual members of the group need to understand their musical roles, which can change often with each piece of music."⁶⁸

Understanding one's role in regards to "The Girl with the Flaxen Hair" is also an aspect that should not be undermined because the melody is found in nearly all the instruments present in the composition. Therefore, the other's instrumental roles will change throughout and should remain aware of when another instrument has the melody of the composition and should adjust dynamics accordingly, so the melodic material is not suppressed by the other instrumental voices. One way to maximize critical listening is simply to record, so the ephemeral nature of music is dispelled and everyone in the ensemble can objectively critique either the ensemble as a whole, or their own individual playing. This allows for the quartet to have more productive rehearsals and not to rely on a coach's input in direction as they may not be present at every rehearsal.⁶⁹

Chamber quartets can hone many skills that any musician should strive to enhance. The exposed playing of such an intimate group significantly applies pressure on each musician, requiring all to have impeccable sense of timing, rhythm, and confidence to fully maximize a quartet experience. These skills can then be transferred to any other ensemble, in which a that a musician may find themselves in. The opportunities to play in a chamber setting helps cultivate

⁶⁸ Albert E. Miller, Jr., *Coaching the Brass Quintet: Developing Better Student Musicians through Chamber Music*, PhD diss., University of Kansas, (2014).

⁶⁹ Ibid., 68.

desired musical skills, but also enhances the versatile skill set of a musician by giving them yet another musical avenue to explore. Because of Debussy's compositional voice, "The Girl with the Flaxen Hair" allows for the versatile trombonist to gain an understanding of two genres simultaneously as well as understanding the style of a truly influential composer. "The Girl with the Flaxen Hair" quartet iteration should be recognized as a worthy addition to a musician who is developing versatility.

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APPENDIX

German

1. Ecclesiastes 3:19

Denn es gehet dem Menschen wie dem Vieh; wie dies stirbt, so stirbt er auch; und haben alle einerlei Odem; und der Mensch hat nichts mehr denn das Vieh: denn es ist alles eitel.

Es fährt alles an einem Ort; es ist alles von Staub gemacht, und wird wieder zu Staub.

Wer weiß, ob der Geist des Menschen aufwärts fahre, und der Odem des Viehes unterwärts unter die Erde fahre? Darum sahe ich, daß nichts bessers ist, denn daß der Mensch fröhlich sei in seiner Arbeit, denn das ist sein Teil. Denn wer will ihn dahin bringen, daß er sehe, was nach ihm geschehen wird?

2. Ecclesiastes 4:1-3.

Ich wandte mich und sahe an Alle, die Unrecht leiden unter der Sonne; Und siehe, da waren Tränen derer, Die Unrecht litten und hatten keinen Tröster; Und die ihnen Unrecht taten, waren zu mächtig, Daß sie keinen Träster haben konnten. Da lobte ich die Toten, Die schon gestorben waren Mehr als die Lebendigen, Die noch das Leben hatten; Und der noch nicht ist, ist besser, als alle beide, Und des Bösen nicht inne wird, Das unter der Sonne geschieht.

English

1. Ecclesiastes 3:19

For that which befalleth the sons of men befalleth beasts, as the one dieth, so dieth the other; yea, they have all one breath; so that a man hath no preeminence above a beast: for all is vanity.

All go unto one place; all are of the dust and all turn to dust again. Who knoweth the spirit of man that goeth upward, and the spirit of the beast that goeth downward to the earth? Wherefore I perceive that there is nothing better, than that a man should rejoice in his own works; for that is his portion: for who shall bring him to see what shall be after him?

2. Ecclesiastes 4:1-3

So I returned, and considered all the oppressions that are done under the sun: and behold the tears of such as were oppressed, and they had no comforter; and on the side of their oppressors there was power; but they had no comforter. Wherefore I praised the dead which are already dead more than the living which are yet alive. Yea, better is he than both they, which hath not yet been, who hath not seen the evil work that is done under the sun.

3. Ecclesiastes (Sirach), 41:1-2.

O Tod, wie bitter bist du, Wenn an dich
gedenket ein Mensch, Der gute Tage und
genug hat Und ohne Sorge lebet; Und dem
es wohl geht in allen Dingen Und noch wohl
essen mag! O Tod, wie bitter bist du.

O Tod, wie wohl tust du dem Dürftigen, Der
da schwach und alt ist, Der in allen Sorgen
steckt, Und nichts Bessers zu hoffen, Noch
zu erwarten hat! O Tod, wie wohl tust du!

4. I Corinthians 13:1-3, 12-13.

Wenn ich mit Menschen und mit
Engelszungen redete, Und hätte der Liebe
nicht, So wär' ich ein tönend Erz, Oder eine
klingende Schelle. Und wenn ich weissagen
könnte, Und wüßte alle Geheimnisse Und
alle Erkenntnis, Und hätte allen Glauben,
also Daß ich Berge versetzte, Und hätte der
Liebe nicht, So wäre ich nichts. Und wenn
ich alle meine Habe den Armen gäbe, Und
ließe meinen Leib brennen, Und hätte der
Liebe nicht, So wäre mir's nichts nütze. Wir
sehen jetzt durch einen Spiegel In einem
dunkeln Worte; Dann aber von Angesicht zu
Angesichte.

3. Ecclesiastes (Sirach), 41:1-2.

O, death, how bitter you are, in the thoughts
of a man who has good days, enough and a
sorrow-free life and who is fortunate in all
things, and still pleased to eat well! O,
death, how bitter you are,

O death, how well you serve him who is in
need Who is feeble and old, and is beset by
all sorrows, and has nothing better to hope
for or to expect; O death, how well you
serve.

4. I Corinthians 13:1-3, 12-13.

Though I speak with the tongues of men and
of angels, and have not charity, I am become
as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.

And though I have the gift of prophecy, and
understand all mysteries, and all knowledge;
and though I have all fatih, so that I could
remove mountains, and have not charity, I
am nothing. And though I bestow all my
goods to feed the poor, and though I give my
body to be burned, and have not charity, it
profiteth me nothing. For now we see
through a glass, darkly; but then face to
face;

Jetzt erkenne ich's stückweise, Dann aber
werd ich's erkennen, Gleich wie ich erkannt
bin.

Nun aber bleibet Glaube, Hoffnung, Liebe,
Diese drei; Aber die Liebe ist die größte
unter ihnen.

Now I know in part; but then I shall know
even as also I am known.

And now abideth faith, hope, agape (love)
these three; but the greatest of these is
agape.⁷⁰

⁷⁰ Lyndon H. LaRouche, Jr., "Getting
Brahms's Idea Across in "Vier Ernste
Gesänge", "The Schiller Institute, August
2002, accessed April 2, 2019.
[https://archive.schillerinstitute.com
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